COLÓQUIO
REVISTA DO DESENVOLVIMENTO REGIONAL
FACCAT
ISSN 2318-180X

GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS, TRANSPARENCY, PARTICIPATION, AND PERFORMANCE IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY FARMING COOPERATIVES

Sinval Vicenzi[1]
Régio Marcio Toesca Gimenes[2]
Juliana Rosa Carrijo Mauad[3]

Abstract: *Family farming cooperatives play an important role in promoting productive inclusion, facilitating market access, and strengthening the economic and social organization of rural territories. However, evidence remains limited regarding how governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and performance are interrelated within these organizations. Given the scarcity of studies specifically addressing family farming cooperatives, this article examines these relationships in the agricultural cooperative literature and discusses their implications for family farming cooperatives. A systematic literature review was conducted following the PRISMA guidelines, combining bibliometric and content analyses of studies indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases between 2011 and 2025. The review included 24 studies, comprising both empirical research and review articles. The findings indicate that formal coordination and control mechanisms and relational mechanisms based on trust, reputation, communication, and social capital perform distinct yet potentially complementary functions, whose effectiveness depends on organizational and contextual characteristics. Transparency emerges as an important dimension of cooperative governance but remains insufficiently operationalized and is rarely examined as an intervening variable between governance mechanisms and member participation. Performance is conceptualized as multidimensional, although its social and environmental dimensions remain less standardized. Research gaps also persist regarding longitudinal studies and the incorporation of contextual moderators. The study concludes that these findings provide analytical reference points and context-dependent guidance for examining family farming cooperatives, without supporting direct generalization to these organizations. By identifying convergences, tensions, and limitations in these relationships, the findings provide a foundation for a context-sensitive research agenda integrating governance, transparency, participation, and performance, with potential implications for cooperative management and public policy.*
Keywords: *Family farming; cooperative management; member engagement; socioeconomic performance; social capital.*

MECANISMOS DE GOVERNANÇA, TRANSPARÊNCIA, PARTICIPAÇÃO E DESEMPENHO EM COOPERATIVAS AGRÍCOLAS: REVISÃO SISTEMÁTICA E IMPLICAÇÕES PARA COOPERATIVAS DA AGRICULTURA FAMILIAR

Resumo: As cooperativas da agricultura familiar desempenham papel relevante na inclusão produtiva, no acesso a mercados e na organização econômica e social dos territórios rurais, mas permanecem limitadas as evidências sobre como mecanismos de governança, transparência, participação e desempenho se articulam nessas organizações. Diante da escassez de estudos específicos, este artigo analisa essas relações na literatura sobre cooperativas agrícolas e discute implicações para cooperativas da agricultura familiar. Realizou-se uma revisão sistemática da literatura, orientada pelo PRISMA, combinando análises bibliométrica e de conteúdo de estudos indexados nas bases Web of Science e Scopus entre 2011 e 2025. O corpus reuniu 24 estudos, entre pesquisas empíricas e revisões. Os resultados indicam que mecanismos formais de coordenação e controle e mecanismos relacionais baseados em confiança, reputação,

[1] Master's student in Agribusiness in the Graduate Program in Agribusiness at the Federal University of Grande Dourados (PPGA/UFGD). ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5944-8908. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/3745289342217834. E-mail: sinvalvicenzi@ufgd.edu.br
[2] Postdoctoral research in Corporate Finance at FEA/USP. PhD in Business Administration from the University of León and the Federal University of Viçosa (UNILEÓN/UFV). PhD in Production and Systems Engineering from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). Assistant Professor at the Federal University of Grande Dourados (UFGD). ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7834-9892. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/1994819710029365. E-mail: regiogimenes@ufgd.edu.br.
[3] Master's degree and PhD in Veterinary Medicine from São Paulo State University (UNESP). Postdoctoral research in Business Administration at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS). Postgraduate specialization in Project Management from Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV). Associate Professor at the Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences of the Federal University of Grande Dourados (FCBA/UFGD). ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3901-1105. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/8885477152489639. E-mail: julianacarrijo@ufgd.edu.br.

comunicação e capital social desempenham funções distintas, porém potencialmente complementares, cuja efetividade depende de características organizacionais e contextuais. A transparência emerge como dimensão relevante da governança, mas permanece pouco operacionalizada e raramente examinada como variável intermediária entre mecanismos de governança e participação. O desempenho é tratado de forma multidimensional, embora dimensões sociais e ambientais ainda apresentem menor padronização. Também persistem lacunas quanto a estudos longitudinais e à incorporação de moderadores contextuais. Conclui-se que os achados oferecem referências analíticas e orientações condicionais para o estudo de cooperativas da agricultura familiar, sem generalização direta. Ao explicitar convergências, tensões e limites dessas relações, sustentam uma agenda contextualizada de investigação integrada sobre governança, transparência, participação e desempenho, com possíveis implicações para a gestão cooperativa e as políticas públicas.
Palavras-chave: Agricultura familiar; gestão cooperativa; engajamento de membros; desempenho socioeconômico; capital social.

1 Introduction

Family farming cooperatives are forms of collective organization that can improve producers' access to markets, services, and marketing opportunities. In the Brazilian context, their participation in institutional markets highlights the importance of coordination among farmers in enabling activities that face constraints when undertaken individually (Costa; Amorim Junior; Silva, 2015). The literature also recognizes the contribution of producer organizations to service provision and the strengthening of smallholder farmers' economic integration (IFAD, 2016). However, the existence of a cooperative organization does not, in itself, ensure that members' interests are represented or that the benefits of collective action are achieved and distributed satisfactorily.

This challenge concerns the governance of relationships among cooperative members, elected representatives, managers, and supervisory bodies. In cooperatives, members are both owners and users of the organization's services, making it necessary to reconcile organizational viability, the fulfillment of members' needs, and the exercise of democratic control. This configuration distinguishes cooperative governance challenges from those faced by organizations primarily oriented toward returns on capital and calls for caution when transferring management recommendations across different organizational forms (Franken; Cook, 2019; Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

Literature addresses these challenges through formal mechanisms, such as contracts, boards, audits, and monitoring systems, and relational mechanisms associated with trust, shared norms, and networks of interaction. Although both types of mechanisms can contribute to coordination, the relationships between them are not necessarily uniform. Combining formal rules with social ties may foster commitment and the alignment of interests, but the outcomes depend on the characteristics of the mechanisms and the contexts in which they operate (Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Hernández-Espallardo et al., 2022; Zeng; Wan, 2024).

Understanding these relationships requires incorporating transparency and participation into the analysis. The existence of representative bodies and voting rights does not establish

whether members receive comprehensible information, monitor their representatives, or influence decisions. Similarly, member involvement may take different forms, ranging from attending meetings to assuming representative and deliberative roles (Morfi et al., 2021; Pek, 2023). It is therefore necessary to examine how governance mechanisms relate to the informational and participatory conditions of cooperative life.

Another challenge concerns the definition of performance. Cooperative economic and financial outcomes, benefits perceived by members, commitment, satisfaction, and social responsibility practices represent related but distinct dimensions. The use of different measures makes it difficult to compare studies and identify the conditions under which particular governance practices contribute to the expected outcomes (Grashuis; Su, 2019; Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

Previous reviews have synthesized the literature on performance, ownership, governance, financing, and member attitudes, as well as the relationships between governance and cooperative performance (Grashuis; Su, 2019; Jamaluddin et al., 2023). The intended contribution of this article is to bring these discussions together through an integrated examination of formal and relational governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and the different dimensions of performance. This approach makes it possible to identify convergent findings, divergent results, and relationships that remain more extensively developed conceptually than empirically investigated.

The initial focus of this research was on family farming cooperatives. However, exploratory searches identified a limited number of studies directly linking this context to the dimensions under investigation. The scope was therefore broadened to agricultural cooperatives, while maintaining a distinction between the body of evidence examined and the intended context of application. Classifying an organization as an agricultural cooperative does not imply that its membership consists exclusively of family farmers, nor does it justify the automatic transfer of findings between these contexts.

The research question guiding this study is: How has literature examined the relationships among governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and performance in agricultural cooperatives, and what implications do these relationships have for understanding family farming cooperatives? Accordingly, this study aims to map and critically analyze these relationships, identifying convergences, tensions, and research gaps relevant to the study of governance in family farming cooperatives.

To achieve this objective, a systematic literature review of 24 studies was conducted, combining bibliometric analysis and content analysis. The interpretation integrates economic-contractual and social-relational perspectives to understand both coordination and control challenges and the conditions underlying cooperation and participation. The article contributes by

synthesizing these relationships and delineating the scope of the available evidence, thereby providing a foundation for context-specific research on family farming.

2 Theoretical and conceptual framework

2.1 Cooperative governance: coordination, control and social relationships

Cooperative governance encompasses the arrangements through which decision-making rights, management responsibilities, and supervisory functions are allocated among members and organizational bodies. Its analysis involves the relationship between member representation and the capacity to conduct economic activities, considering that cooperative members are simultaneously owners and users of the organization. The differentiation of management, supervision, and member control functions therefore constitutes a central challenge in cooperative governance (Bijman; Hanisch; Van der Sangen, 2014).

The economic-contractual perspective encompasses two theoretical approaches that make distinct contributions. Agency theory focuses on the delegation of decision-making authority, information asymmetry, and potential misalignments among members, representatives, and managers. Transaction cost economics contributes to the examination of relationship coordination, opportunism risks, and the costs associated with establishing and monitoring agreements. In cooperative research, these perspectives guide the analysis of contracts, incentives, oversight, and the allocation of responsibilities (Hernández-Espallardo et al., 2022; Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

In this article, formal governance refers to explicit arrangements that establish rights, obligations, and procedures for coordination and control. These include contracts, boards, audits, rules governing the distribution of financial results, and monitoring systems. Formalization can make expectations verifiable and provide instruments for monitoring management activities. However, the existence of a rule does not necessarily imply compliance, and the presence of a supervisory body does not demonstrate its capacity to perform its functions effectively.

Relational governance refers to coordination sustained by trust, shared norms, reputation, and interactions among participants. The social capital perspective helps explain how social networks and relationships can facilitate cooperation and member involvement. Its contribution is particularly relevant to examining behaviors that cannot be fully specified or guaranteed through contracts, such as the willingness to collaborate, share information, and assume collective responsibilities (Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Morfi et al., 2021).

The stakeholder approach introduces a different question: Which interests and outcomes should be considered when evaluating governance? In cooperatives, the analysis extends beyond internal financial outcomes to encompass members' needs and the organization's relationships with other stakeholder groups. This perspective helps explain the diversity of organizational objectives

and performance criteria, whereas social capital emphasizes the relational resources that may sustain collective action. These two approaches are brought together in this review because of their attention to social relationships, without treating them as theoretically equivalent (Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

The interaction between formal and relational governance may take different forms. Complementarity occurs when combining mechanisms contributes to coordination in ways that could not be achieved by employing each mechanism independently. However, the simultaneous presence of contracts and trust does not demonstrate such complementarity. It is necessary to examine how these mechanisms interact, which outcomes are considered, and under what conditions their combination proves beneficial (Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Zeng; Wan, 2024).

This distinction guides the interpretation adopted in this article. Formal mechanisms are examined in terms of how they define and monitor responsibilities, whereas relational mechanisms are examined in terms of how they sustain cooperation and commitment. Their interaction is treated as a possibility contingent on organizational characteristics rather than as a universal principle of effectiveness.

2.2 Transparency and participation: information, influence and deliberation

Transparency represents the informational dimension of governance. Bushman, Piotroski and Smith (2004) conceptualize transparency in terms of the availability of firm-specific information to external agents of publicly traded companies. Although developed in a different organizational context, this understanding provides a reference for examining the conditions of access to information in cooperatives, considering members' dual position as owners and users. For the purposes of this review, transparency encompasses the availability, quality, timeliness, and accessibility of information necessary for monitoring management activities and participating in decision-making processes.

It is necessary to distinguish the mechanisms governing information disclosure from the conditions under which information reaches cooperative members. Accountability rules and procedures are part of formal governance mechanisms, whereas transparency concerns the informational conditions that enable members to understand and monitor decisions and outcomes. When examined from members' perspectives, transparency involves their perceptions of information accessibility, clarity, and timeliness. Accountability, in turn, also entails explaining and justifying decisions and outcomes. Thus, the existence of formal disclosure procedures does not ensure that information is comprehensible and usable by members. Transparency recommendations are included among good cooperative governance practices, but their normative nature does not constitute evidence of effects on performance (Sistema OCB, 2025).

This distinction makes it possible to examine transparency and participation together without treating them as equivalent. Discussions of member control and managerial accountability emphasize the importance of management oversight in cooperative governance (Bijman; Hanisch; Van der Sangen, 2014). The deliberative perspective further emphasizes the conditions under which members discuss information and participate in decision-making (Pek, 2023). Within this framework, transparency constitutes a potential enabling condition for informed participation, whose contribution depends on members' opportunities to seek clarification, engage in discussion, and exert influence, without necessarily ensuring effective involvement or improved organizational outcomes.

Participation encompasses members' involvement in representation, monitoring, and decision-making processes. It is necessary to distinguish attendance at general assemblies, holding elected positions, and the capacity to engage in deliberation. These forms of participation may coexist, but they capture different aspects of the relationship between members and their cooperative. The discussion of deliberative democracy shifts attention from the number of formal opportunities for participation to the quality of discussion and the influence exercised by participants (Pek, 2023).

Participation must also be distinguished from trust, satisfaction, and commitment. Trust reflects expectations regarding the behavior of other actors; satisfaction involves an evaluation of experiences or benefits received; and commitment refers to the bond between members and the organization. These constructs may be associated with participation but should not be used as substitutes for it when interpreting findings. This distinction is necessary to understand studies addressing social networks, involvement in governance, and member commitment (Morfi et al., 2021; Hao et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024).

Democratic control also entails costs associated with organizing collective decision-making. Reconciling preferences, exchanging information, and reaching collective decisions require time and resources. Pozzobon and Zylbersztajn (2013) examine these democratic costs as a challenge specific to member-controlled organizations. Such costs are distinct from agency costs, as they may arise even when representatives and managers act in accordance with their mandates.

The relationship between transparency and participation is therefore a matter of informational and political coordination. Access to information may facilitate monitoring and deliberation, while participation may increase demands for clarification and accountability. This potential reciprocity precludes assuming a single direction of causality. In this review, this relationship is treated as an analytical question to be examined against the available evidence.

2.3 Performance and the integration of concepts

The analysis of cooperative performance requires distinguishing organizational outcomes from outcomes experienced by members. Economic and financial indicators provide information about the cooperative's operations and viability, whereas prices received, services used, satisfaction, and perceived benefits relate to aspects of members' relationships with the organization. Performance assessments may also include social and environmental outcomes, provided that these dimensions are specifically defined and measured (Grashuis; Su, 2019; Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

This distinction prevents any favorable outcome from being interpreted as evidence of improved overall performance. An association between governance and commitment does not automatically demonstrate increased profitability; social responsibility practices do not necessarily translate into demonstrable improvements in members' well-being; and perceived satisfaction cannot substitute for objective performance indicators. The diversity of cooperative objectives requires acknowledging these differences rather than combining distinct measures into an undifferentiated category.

The framework adopted in this study integrates four questions: how formal and relational mechanisms coordinate behavior; which informational conditions support management oversight; how members participate in and influence decisions; and which outcomes are considered when evaluating the organization and the benefits it provides. These questions guide the analysis of the reviewed studies without assuming that all studies jointly examine the four dimensions.

The potential relationship among governance, transparency, participation, and performance therefore constitutes an interpretive framework rather than a causal model validated by this review. Characteristics such as organizational scale, membership composition, board structure, and institutional context must be considered when analyzing convergent and divergent findings. For family farming cooperatives, this framework provides research questions whose relevance depends on the specific characteristics of the organizations under investigation.

3 Methodology

A systematic literature review was conducted, combining bibliometric analysis and content analysis. A systematic review provides a structured approach to identifying, selecting, and interpreting publications, making explicit the decisions that delimit the body of evidence examined (Petticrew; Roberts, 2006; Snyder, 2019). The review was reported in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, an update of the original statement, covering the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of studies (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021).

The Scopus and Web of Science databases were searched, considering their multidisciplinary coverage and the availability of metadata suitable for bibliometric analysis (Baas

et al., 2020; Birkle et al., 2020). The review covered publications from 2011 to 2025, with coverage of the final year limited to the dates on which the searches were conducted.

The decision to define agricultural cooperatives as the scope of the review was based on preliminary exploratory searches, which retrieved a limited number of studies jointly addressing governance, transparency, participation, and performance in the specific context of family farming cooperatives. These preliminary searches were exploratory and were not included in either the review corpus or the study selection process. Broadening the scope was intended to maintain relevance to the original research focus, given that agricultural cooperatives share collective ownership structures, member participation, deliberative bodies, and coordination challenges relevant to family farming. Studies were considered eligible if they addressed agricultural cooperatives and examined governance mechanisms related to at least one of the following dimensions: transparency, participation, or organizational performance, regardless of whether the organizations under investigation were explicitly classified as family farming cooperatives. Consequently, the evidence is interpreted as providing analytical reference points for this context rather than findings directly generalized to all family farming cooperatives. Classification as a family farming cooperative was not required for inclusion; instead, family farming cooperatives remained the context within which the implications of the findings were discussed.

3.1 Search strategy and record identification

Searches were conducted on September 16 and 17, 2025, using the fields corresponding to titles, abstracts, and keywords, with the following search string: ("governance mechanisms" OR "cooperative governance" OR "formal governance" OR "informal governance") AND (transparen* OR participat* OR performance*) AND (cooperativ*).

The OR operator in the second block enabled the retrieval of studies addressing at least one of the dimensions of transparency, participation, or performance. No sector-specific descriptors were included in the block referring to cooperatives; instead, relevance to the agricultural sector was assessed subsequently. Although “relational governance” is adopted as the conceptual term throughout this article, the expression "informal governance" is retained here to accurately report the search strategy used.

The document categories Article and Review were selected in both databases, along with Proceedings Paper in Web of Science and Conference Paper in Scopus. Filters were applied to include publications in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, without restrictions by subject area. After applying these filters and the publication-year range, 176 records were retrieved from Web of Science and 161 from Scopus, yielding a total of 337 records.

The metadata were exported in BibTeX format and imported into the R environment using

RStudio and the bibliometrix package. Duplicate records were automatically identified and removed based on the available bibliographic metadata. A total of 128 duplicate records were removed, leaving 209 unique records, which were subsequently exported to an XLS spreadsheet.

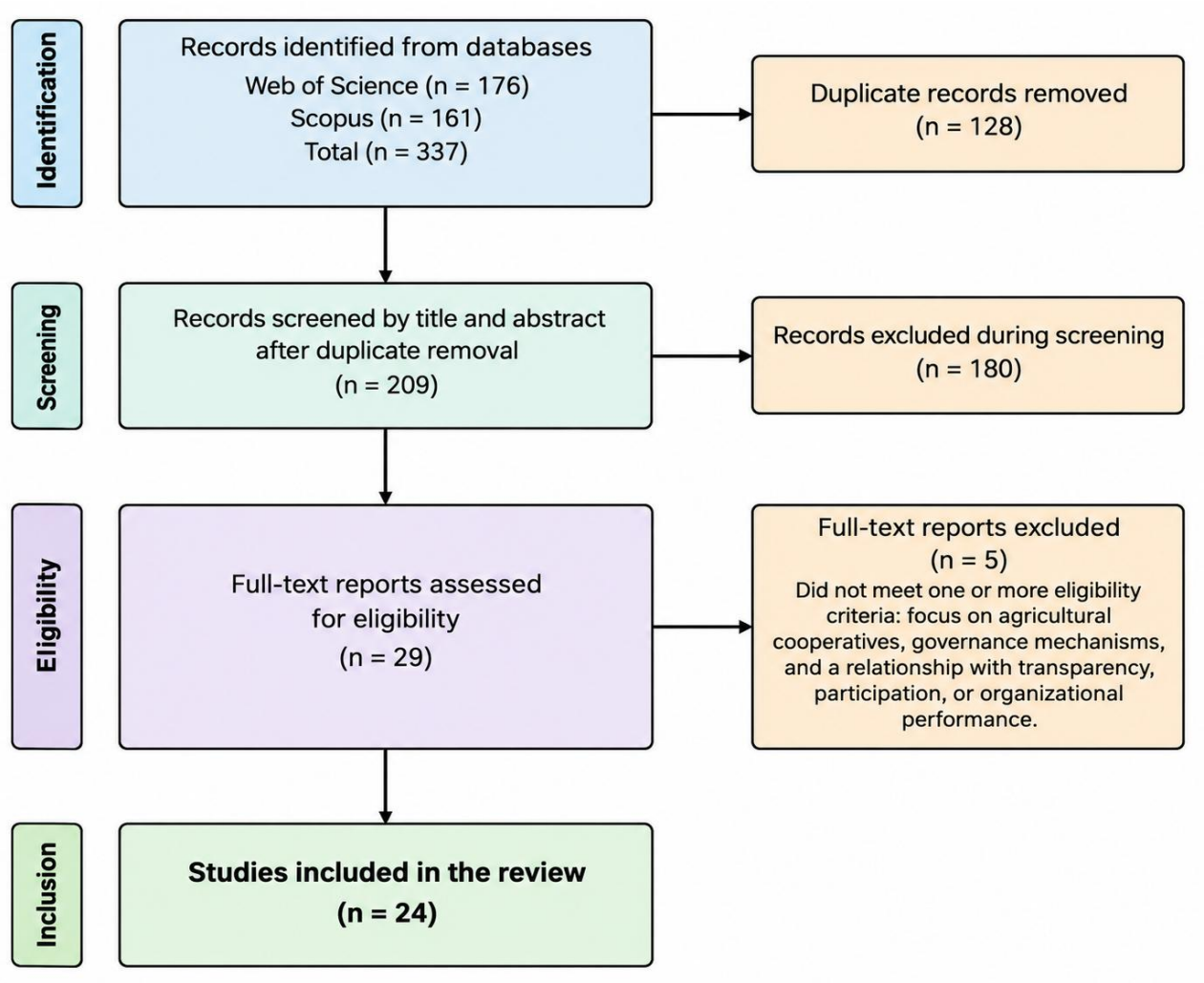
3.2 Screening, eligibility and inclusion

The inclusion criteria encompassed studies on agricultural cooperatives that examined governance mechanisms related to at least one of the following dimensions: transparency, participation, or organizational performance. Studies were not required to investigate all these relationships simultaneously.

The 209 records were screened by reviewing their titles and abstracts. Studies were excluded if they did not address agricultural cooperatives, did not examine governance mechanisms, or did not establish a relationship with the dimensions under investigation. At this stage, 180 records were excluded, and 29 studies were selected for full-text assessment.

During the full-text eligibility assessment, five studies were excluded because the complete texts did not confirm that the eligibility criteria, initially suggested by their titles and abstracts, were jointly satisfied. These studies failed to meet one or more of the established inclusion requirements. The final corpus comprised 24 studies: 23 journal articles and one conference proceedings paper. The corpus included both empirical studies and literature reviews. Figure 1 presents the identification and selection process.

Figure 1 – Flow diagram of study identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the systematic review records (2025).

3.3 Analytical procedures

The bibliometric analysis was conducted in the R environment using RStudio, the bibliometrix package, and its Biblioshiny interface (Aria; Cuccurullo, 2017). The analysis examined annual publication trends, publication sources, authors' institutional and geographical affiliations, citation counts, and keyword frequency and co-occurrence in the metadata of the 24 included studies. Frequency analysis identified the most recurrent terms, whereas the co-occurrence network represented their joint occurrence across bibliographic records, helping to characterize the thematic organization of the corpus.

Citation counts correspond to the values recorded in the consolidated metadata from the two databases following data integration and deduplication in September 2025. Affiliations were interpreted as author–institution and author–country relationships and were not treated as equivalent to the geographical locations where the studies were conducted. Keyword frequency

and co-occurrence were used to characterize the thematic organization of the corpus rather than to demonstrate empirical relationships among the concepts.

For the content analysis, all 24 studies were read in full, and their information was recorded in a synthesis matrix. The extracted information included research objectives, study contexts, theoretical perspectives, methodological procedures, governance mechanisms, relationships with transparency, participation, and performance, main findings, and research gaps.

The categorization process combined a deductive approach, based on the dimensions of governance, transparency, participation, and performance, with an inductive approach grounded in recurring patterns identified during the reading of the studies. The information organized in the synthesis matrix supported comparisons of the mechanisms investigated, the relationships examined, and the findings reported, while accounting for differences in context, research design, and measurement. The interpretation integrated two analytical perspectives: the economic-contractual perspective, encompassing agency theory and transaction cost economics; and the social-relational perspective, encompassing the stakeholder approach and the social capital perspective. These perspectives were used to interpret coordination and control challenges, the diversity of interests, and the conditions underlying cooperation and participation, without assuming theoretical equivalence or uniformity across the evidence.

The included literature reviews were used to characterize theoretical perspectives, methodological trends, and research gaps. When these reviews synthesized primary studies that were also included in the corpus, their findings were not treated as additional independent empirical evidence. No formal assessment of methodological quality or risk of bias was conducted. The synthesis is interpretive in nature and does not establish a classification of the certainty of the evidence. The findings should therefore be interpreted considering the heterogeneity of research designs, study contexts, and measurement approaches.

4 Results and discussion

The presentation of the results combines a bibliometric characterization of the corpus with an interpretation of the relationships among governance, transparency, participation, and performance. The bibliometric analysis describes the characteristics of the selected publications, whereas the content analysis examines convergences, differences, and limitations in the findings. Implications for family farming cooperatives are discussed separately, maintaining the distinction between observed evidence and potential avenues for further investigation.

4.1 Bibliometric characterization of the corpus

The corpus comprised 24 studies, including 23 journal articles and one conference

proceedings paper. The temporal distribution was uneven: no eligible publications were identified in 2012, 2015, or 2020, or in 2025 up to the searches conducted in September. Twelve studies were published between 2011 and 2019, while another 12 were published between 2021 and 2024. The highest annual publication count occurred in 2023, with five studies. Together, 2023 and 2024 accounted for nine studies, representing 37.5% of the corpus. This concentration characterizes the selected body of literature but does not demonstrate trends in the overall scientific production on cooperative governance.

Regarding publication sources, Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics accounted for five studies (20.83% of the corpus), while *Agribusiness* contributed four (16.67%). The International Journal of Social Economics and SAGE Open each published two studies. Together, these four journals accounted for 13 studies, representing 54.17% of the total. The remaining 11 studies were distributed across different publication sources, with one publication in each.

A total of 39 institutions and 69 author–institution affiliations were identified. The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences accounted for five affiliations; Makerere University and South China Agricultural University for four each; and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universitas Padjadjaran, and Universidade de São Paulo for three each. Together, these six institutions accounted for 22 affiliations, approximately 31.9% of the total. The remaining institutions had one or two affiliations each, indicating an institutionally dispersed distribution of affiliations.

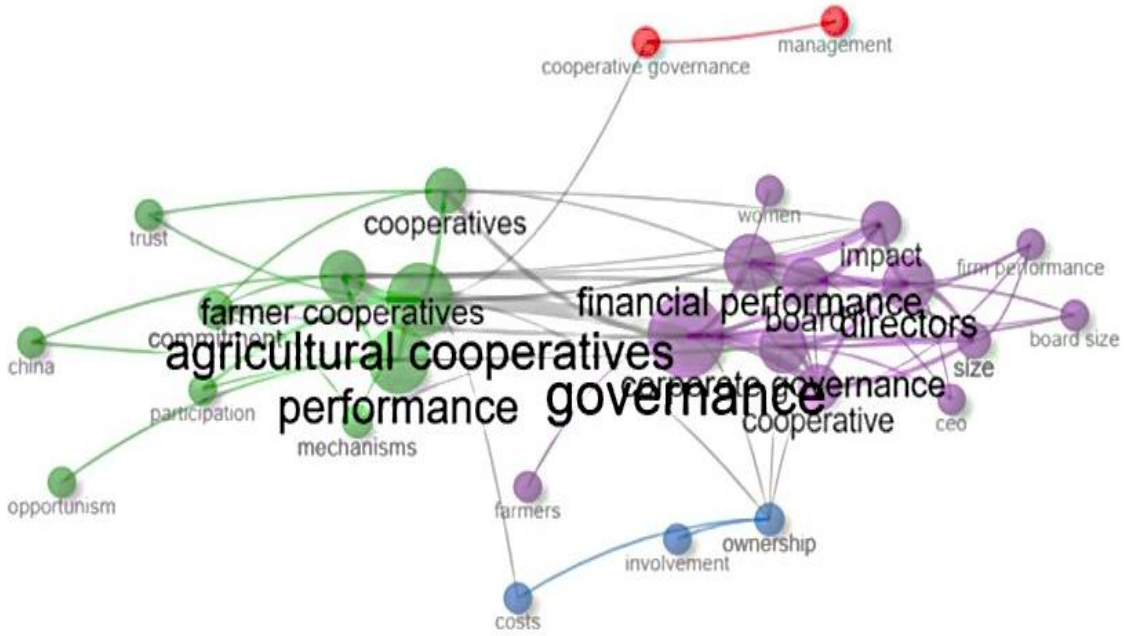
The geographical distribution comprised 75 author–country affiliations across 14 countries in Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Africa. Malaysia accounted for 12 affiliations (16%), followed by the United States with 11 (14.67%), and Brazil and China with nine each (12% per country). Together, these four countries accounted for 41 affiliations, representing 54.67% of the total. These findings reflect authors' institutional affiliations and do not, in themselves, establish the geographical distribution of the cooperatives investigated.

The consolidated metadata recorded 397 citations as of September 2025, averaging 16.54 citations per study. The five most cited studies accounted for 71.03% of all citations, while the ten most cited accounted for 89.67%. Grashuis and Su (2019) received 138 citations, followed by Bijman, Hanisch and Van der Sangen (2014), with 72, and Kyazze, Nkote and Wakaisuka-Isingoma (2017), with 27. This concentration indicates unequal visibility among publications but does not constitute a direct measure of methodological quality or strength of evidence.

The keyword network highlighted the terms governance, agricultural cooperatives, and performance, which were connected to terms such as board, directors, financial performance, participation, trust, and opportunism. Four clusters were identified: formal governance structures and economic and financial indicators; social relationships and participation; governance and management; and ownership, member involvement, and costs. Keyword frequency analysis also

highlighted board size, board meetings, CEO, and social capital. Figure 2 presents the co-occurrence network.

Figure 2 - Keyword co-occurrence network of the included studies.



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the research data (2025).

These clusters indicate that structural and relational dimensions coexist within the thematic organization of the corpus. However, keyword proximity does not demonstrate that the studies jointly examined the corresponding concepts, nor does it establish relationships among them. This distinction supports the need for a more detailed examination of mechanisms, outcomes, and contexts through content analysis.

4.2 Formal and relational governance: complementarity and the limits of control

The content analysis of the 24 studies identified findings and research gaps related to governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and organizational performance. Four recurring theoretical perspectives were identified. For analytical purposes, agency theory and transaction cost economics were grouped under an economic-contractual perspective, associated with incentives, monitoring, and opportunism. The stakeholder approach and the social capital perspective were grouped under a social-relational perspective, considering the diversity of interests and organizational outcomes and the relevance of trust, networks, and participation. This framework guided the interpretation of the evidence without assuming equivalence among the

theoretical perspectives grouped together.

The reviewed literature distinguishes formal mechanisms, such as boards of directors, supply contracts, monitoring systems, audits, economic incentives, and hierarchical control arrangements, from relational mechanisms associated with trust, shared norms, reputation, communication, and social capital. Social networks are also linked to member involvement in cooperative governance (Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Morfi et al., 2021).

These mechanisms perform distinct yet potentially complementary functions. Rules and contractual arrangements establish responsibilities and monitoring procedures, whereas trust-based relationships may sustain continued cooperation and member commitment. However, complementarity depends on the configuration of the mechanisms and the conditions under which they are employed (Hernández-Espallardo et al., 2022; Zeng; Wan, 2024).

Liang, Lu and Deng (2018) identified a positive association between social capital and economic performance, which was stronger when formal governance related to income distribution was more robust. This finding supports the possibility of complementarity between relational resources and formal rules within the configuration examined. However, it does not imply that any control mechanism necessarily strengthens trust or produces equivalent outcomes.

Zeng, Wan and He (2023) and Zeng and Wan (2024) link contractual and relational governance mechanisms to member commitment. Rules governing the distribution of financial results, communication, trust, and reputation are central to this discussion. Under conditions of greater market uncertainty, complementarity may become more relevant, suggesting that the contribution of governance mechanisms also depends on the environment in which cooperative relationships develop.

The findings of Hernández-Espallardo et al. (2022) demonstrate that increased control does not necessarily produce superior outcomes. In primary cooperatives, intensified monitoring may initially reduce opportunism. However, at high levels of implementation, monitoring may become less effective and be associated with increased opportunism. The relationships also differ between primary and federated cooperatives, indicating that the appropriate intensity of governance mechanisms depends on the characteristics of the relationship between the organization and its members.

Organizational scale and complexity introduce additional challenges related to representation, oversight, and control. Bijman, Hanisch and Van der Sangen (2014) examine changes in the governance of European agricultural cooperatives, including the allocation of responsibilities between supervision and management and the involvement of professional managers. These findings highlight the need to examine governance mechanisms in relation to organizational transformations rather than treating them as instruments with invariant

effectiveness.

Carpes and Cunha (2018) contribute to a life-cycle perspective. Their study indicates that member participation is less developed at the maturity stage than during earlier stages, whereas auditing plays a prominent role in organizations classified as mature. Conclusions regarding boards of directors require caution, given the authors' reservations concerning confirmation of the corresponding hypothesis. Differences across life-cycle stages contribute to understanding governance configurations but are not equivalent to tracking changes within the same cooperative over time.

Taken together, the studies suggest that both formal rules and control mechanisms and trust-based relationships can contribute to cooperative coordination in different ways. Agency theory and transaction cost economics help explain the role of rules, incentives, and monitoring in management oversight and the mitigation of opportunism. The social capital perspective contributes to understanding how personal and community ties may sustain cooperation and member involvement. Integrating these perspectives allows the potential complementarity between formal and relational mechanisms to be interpreted without assuming that their simultaneous presence necessarily ensures improved outcomes (Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Morfi et al., 2021; Hernández-Espallardo et al., 2022).

Organizational growth, management professionalization, and member heterogeneity make it particularly relevant to examine how these mechanisms interact under different organizational conditions. From this perspective, accountability, oversight, and communication practices may complement trust-based relationships and provide conditions for monitoring management activities. Governance quality, therefore, cannot be assessed solely by the number of control mechanisms or the strength of social ties, but rather by how these elements interact to coordinate interests and monitor decisions, considering the organizational context and the limitations associated with their use.

4.3 Participation, representation and informational conditions

Member participation involves institutional opportunities for representation, social relationships, and the competencies required to monitor and influence decisions. Holding elected positions, overseeing representatives, and engaging in deliberation represent distinct forms of member involvement, whose understanding requires consideration of both formal structures and the conditions under which participation takes place.

Using data collected at three points over a 20-year period, Morfi et al. (2021) identified the importance of personal networks for involvement in cooperative representation. Family relationships and friendships were particularly important compared with professional networks.

The relevance of these ties persisted throughout the period analyzed, although this does not imply that the strength of all relationships remained constant. The findings suggest that willingness to assume governance responsibilities cannot be explained solely by electoral rules or the formal characteristics of boards.

Tadesse and Kassie (2017), using choice experiments, identified limitations in farmers' trust in their organizations and fellow members. The probability of trust was higher among members who were more actively involved in governance, had longer membership tenure, and belonged to older organizations. These findings highlight the relevance of participation experience and shared history in understanding cooperative relationships, without independently demonstrating reductions in monitoring costs.

Regarding boards of directors, findings vary according to context and evaluation criteria. Franken and Cook (2019), studying agricultural cooperatives in the United States, found favorable outcomes associated with smaller boards. They also identified a positive relationship between chief executive officer tenure and certain measures of financial performance. The specificity of these measures warrants caution against drawing general conclusions regarding the superiority of more experienced executives.

Hakelius (2018), examining Swedish agricultural cooperatives, identified benefits associated with relatively larger boards, emphasizing board members' educational backgrounds and chief executive officers' understanding of cooperative-specific characteristics. The presence of external board members did not ensure improved performance in the context examined. These differences from Franken and Cook (2019) should be interpreted in light of research designs, organizational characteristics, and measurement approaches rather than as equivalent tests of a universal rule regarding board size.

Huhtala and Tuominen (2016) contribute to this discussion by examining the election and selection processes of board members. Bijman, Hanisch and Van der Sangen (2014) demonstrate that governance adjustments involve the composition of governing bodies, the allocation of responsibilities, and management professionalization. Together, these studies indicate that board structure should be examined alongside board functioning and relationships with members and managers.

Othman et al. (2016), examining cooperatives from different sectors in Malaysia, found no statistically significant associations between performance and either board size or meeting frequency. The multisectoral scope of the study prevents these findings from being attributed exclusively to agricultural cooperatives but reinforces the need for caution when interpreting isolated structural indicators.

The preparation of elected representatives is another important aspect of this discussion.

Herchenbach et al. (2024) identified the largest competency gaps in cooperative governance and policies and cooperative finance. Training priorities included finance, strategic planning, understanding economic and sectoral conditions, and formulating critical and constructive questions. These findings indicate that representation should be examined alongside the competencies required to monitor and discuss organizational decisions.

Participation also entails costs inherent to democratic organization. Pozzobon and Zylbersztajn (2013) distinguish democratic costs from agency costs, considering the challenges of coordinating interests and collective decision-making. Information organization, conflict mediation, and deliberation time are therefore relevant to understanding how participatory processes function.

Pek (2023) proposes deliberative minipublics as a potential means of improving participation and representation in large cooperatives. This constitutes a conceptual and institutional contribution rather than empirical evidence of improved performance in the organizations examined by this review. Bringing these studies together highlights two tensions: reconciling democratic participation with decision-making capacity and combining representativeness with competence.

In this context, transparency constitutes an important but insufficiently examined dimension. Within the corpus, transparency is associated with accountability, monitoring, and communication, but remains inadequately operationalized as a distinct construct and has received limited attention as an intervening variable between governance mechanisms and participation, particularly regarding the deliberative dimension of participation.

The existence of boards, audits, and oversight rules does not demonstrate that members receive comprehensible and timely information or use such information to influence decisions. In the interpretation proposed in this synthesis, information quality may facilitate the translation of formal participation opportunities into monitoring and deliberation. However, mediation through transparency cannot be assumed solely from the presence of governance mechanisms.

The integrated interpretation brings together two dimensions of participation. The social capital perspective helps explain the relevance of personal networks to member involvement, as demonstrated by Morfi et al. (2021). The democratic costs perspective, in turn, clarifies that organizing representation and collective decision-making entails specific challenges that extend beyond managerial monitoring (Pozzobon; Zylbersztajn, 2013). Within this integrated perspective, informational conditions constitute an important issue for understanding how formal opportunities for participation may translate into monitoring and deliberation, although the studies discussed do not demonstrate a general mediating role of transparency.

4.4 Performance: diversity of outcomes and limits to comparability

Cooperative performance is treated as multidimensional, although its measurement remains concentrated on economic and financial indicators and outcomes related to member benefits and attitudes. The reviews by Grashuis and Su (2019) and Jamaluddin et al. (2023) highlight the diversity of approaches and the heterogeneity of relationships between governance and performance, making direct comparisons across studies difficult.

Kusmiati et al. (2023) investigated factors associated with the success of Indonesian cooperatives, considering performance across economic, social, environmental, and governance dimensions. Exploratory factor analysis identified seven factors: member participation, membership, cooperative governance structure, cooperative board, vertical integration, collective action, and transaction costs. In the multiple regression analysis, member participation, cooperative board, vertical integration, and collective action showed positive and statistically significant associations with cooperative success, whereas the remaining factors were not statistically significant. These findings contribute to an integrated analysis of governance, participation, and performance by highlighting the relevance of member representation, member involvement, and the organization of economic activities within the context investigated.

The first distinction concerns organizational outcomes and benefits obtained by cooperative members. Grashuis and Su (2019) synthesize studies associating cooperative membership with better prices, greater technology adoption, and increased income, although these benefits are not uniform across producers and contexts. Such outcomes should not be conflated with the cooperative's financial performance, as they also reflect members' economic circumstances.

Thomas et al. (2011), drawing on face-to-face interviews with 203 farmers in the Aegean region of Turkey, employed the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to compare preferences for different organizations. Cooperatives were preferred over the alternatives considered, both in assessments based on economic criteria related to profit, risk, and marketing and in assessments of social benefits, human development, and democratic participation. These findings reflect farmers' evaluations and preferences and should be distinguished from objective measures of organizational performance.

Behavioral outcomes introduce another dimension. Ferreira et al. (2021) identified an association between participation in a technical assistance program and a higher probability of dairy farmers' loyalty to their cooperative. This finding suggests that the provision of services may contribute to aligning individual and collective interests and maintaining organizational ties. However, loyalty and commitment are not equivalent to financial or social outcomes, even though they may be related to them.

Regarding social performance, Kyazze, Nkote and Wakaisuka-Isingoma (2017) identified positive and statistically significant associations with monitoring rights and innovation. Ratification of managerial decisions and policy compliance did not exhibit statistically significant associations. These findings demonstrate that different governance components are not uniformly related to social performance. Because the sample included cooperatives from different sectors, interpretation requires distinguishing general cooperative evidence from findings specific to agricultural cooperatives.

In Brazilian cooperatives, Silva et al. (2023) identified associations between social responsibility practices and governance mechanisms, including risk management, supervisory boards, audit committees, and compliance with codes of ethics. The magnitude and statistical significance of these relationships varied across the dimensions examined. Identifying specific mechanisms and outcomes makes it possible to understand these differences without attributing a uniform effect to governance across all practices.

The findings of Kyazze, Nkote and Wakaisuka-Isingoma (2017) and Silva et al. (2023) extend performance assessment beyond financial indicators. However, they do not automatically establish that transparency, reduced conflicts of interest, or decreased information asymmetries mediated the observed associations. These possibilities must be distinguished from the outcomes directly examined.

According to the studies analyzed, social and, particularly, environmental dimensions were measured less frequently and with less standardization. Environmental sustainability remains insufficiently operationalized and is captured through heterogeneous indicators, limiting comparability. Broadening performance criteria must therefore be accompanied by definitions that distinguish economic, social, environmental, and behavioral outcomes while preserving the specific characteristics of cooperative objectives.

Methodological characteristics help explain this heterogeneity. Among the empirical studies, questionnaire-based surveys and quantitative approaches employing regression and correlation analyses were common (Franken; Cook, 2019; Liang; Lu; Deng, 2018; Silva et al., 2023). Mixed-methods and longitudinal studies were less frequent, limiting the integration of identified associations with an in-depth understanding of organizational processes.

The surveys conducted at three points in time by Morfi et al. (2021) and the choice experiments employed by Tadesse and Kassie (2017) illustrate alternative methodological approaches represented in the corpus. These contributions broaden the possibilities for investigation but do not justify attributing the same capacity to establish temporal directionality or explain mechanisms underlying outcomes to all studies.

The prevalence of cross-sectional research designs constrains the interpretation of changes

and the direction of relationships. Comparisons among cooperatives classified at different life-cycle stages must also be distinguished from longitudinal observations of the same organizations. Accordingly, conclusions should consider research design, context, and construct operationalization jointly.

Literature reviews contribute to contextualizing findings, identifying trends, and organizing research gaps. However, when they synthesize primary studies that are also included in the corpus, they do not constitute additional independent empirical evidence. Distinguishing these contributions prevents the repetition of a finding across different publications from being interpreted as confirmation based on new observations.

The diversity of outcomes can be interpreted through the stakeholder approach presented in the theoretical framework, which considers the different interests and benefits involved in evaluating cooperatives. This perspective helps explain the relevance of considering outcomes for both the organization and its members, but it does not render financial indicators, economic benefits, subjective evaluations, and behavioral outcomes equivalent. Comparisons across studies reinforce the need to preserve these distinctions. Differences among these measures and across the contexts investigated limit comparability and must be considered when interpreting associations between governance and performance.

4.5 Integrative synthesis and implications for family farming cooperatives

Taken together, the studies provide a basis for understanding cooperative governance through the interaction of formal and relational mechanisms, informational conditions, participation, and organizational outcomes. Contractual rules and monitoring mechanism structure responsibilities and oversight procedures, whereas trust, social capital, and networks are associated with cooperation and member commitment. The evidence points to potential complementarities, contingent on the configuration and intensity of the mechanisms employed.

Findings concerning monitoring, boards, and participation also demonstrate that the presence of a particular practice does not ensure better outcomes. Organizational scale, complexity, cooperative type, life-cycle stage, and market uncertainty are relevant factors for interpreting the differences identified. However, these characteristics were not always examined as moderating variables: describing them or comparing different contexts is not equivalent to testing how they modify a relationship between variables.

Transparency remains a central research gap. Its relevance to management oversight and informed participation is conceptually supported, but its operationalization and examination as an intervening variable remain limited. The review provides a foundation for examining governance, transparency, participation, and performance together without establishing a general causal

sequence among these dimensions.

This integration also requires recognizing the diversity of cooperative outcomes. Financial indicators, members' economic benefits, loyalty, commitment, and social responsibility practices represent related but distinct dimensions. The lower degree of standardization in social and environmental measures limits understanding of how different governance configurations are associated with the broader set of organizational objectives.

For family farming cooperatives, the findings provide analytical reference points for investigating the combination of formal and relational mechanisms and their relationships with transparency, participation, and performance. The relevance of these relationships depends on the characteristics of the membership base, the services provided, and the conditions under which organizations operate, without assuming that community proximity automatically generates trust or effective participation.

One implication is the need to examine how boards, oversight, and accountability interact with trust, communication, and cooperative networks. Another concern is understanding whether the information made available enables members to monitor their representatives, discuss alternatives, and influence decisions. Performance assessment should distinguish the cooperative's economic situation from the benefits and perceptions of its members.

Applying these analytical reference points requires maintaining the distinction between agricultural cooperatives and family farming cooperatives, as membership composition is not always explicitly reported in the studies. It also requires acknowledging the broader scope of the multisectoral studies discussed. Consequently, the findings cannot be directly generalized to all family farming cooperatives.

The contribution of this synthesis lies in organizing convergent findings, identifying tensions, and delineating relationships that require context-specific investigation. The implications presented constitute questions for further empirical examination and context-dependent guidance, whose applicability to family farming depends on an analysis of the organizations and members involved.

5 Final remarks

This article examined the relationships among governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and performance in the selected literature on agricultural cooperatives and discussed their implications for family farming cooperatives. The combination of bibliometric and content analyses of 24 studies enabled the identification of convergent findings, differences, and research gaps. The findings indicate potential complementarities between formal and relational governance mechanisms, contingent on organizational characteristics, context, and the intensity with which

these mechanisms are employed, without supporting a universally effective governance configuration.

Participation encompasses different forms of representation, monitoring, and influence, whose understanding requires consideration of social networks, competencies, and the costs of collective decision-making. Transparency provides an important analytical dimension for examining the informational conditions underlying these processes but remains insufficiently operationalized and has received limited attention in studies integrating it with the other dimensions. Performance, in turn, encompasses heterogeneous measures, making it necessary to distinguish organizational outcomes, member benefits, and behavioral assessments. The reviewed corpus does not establish a general causal sequence linking governance, transparency, participation, and performance.

The contribution of this review lies in integrating these findings with economic-contractual and social-relational theoretical perspectives, highlighting convergences, tensions, and interpretive limitations. For family farming cooperatives, the findings provide analytical reference points and context-dependent guidance, whose relevance depends on management conditions, membership composition, services provided, and community relationships. Applying these insights requires context-specific investigation rather than the direct transfer of evidence or the formulation of broadly generalizable recommendations for this segment.

Conclusions should be interpreted considering the review's limitations. The restrictions concerning the databases searched, publication period, languages, and document types may have limited the retrieval of relevant studies. No formal assessment of methodological quality or risk of bias was conducted, nor were the findings weighed according to these criteria. The studies employed different methods and indicators, whose specific characteristics must be considered when interpreting the relationships among governance, transparency, participation, and performance. Furthermore, the limited identification of studies explicitly focusing on family farming cooperatives constrains the applicability of the conclusions to this context.

Future research should further develop the measurement of transparency and participation and examine direct and indirect relationships among governance mechanisms, transparency, participation, and performance. Further investigation is needed to determine the extent to which qualified boards, audits, clear rules, and accountability practices are associated with perceived transparency; how perceived transparency relates to informed and deliberative participation; and how services provided to cooperative members contribute to the alignment of interests and organizational outcomes.

This research agenda may consider cooperative type, life-cycle stage, members' socioeconomic heterogeneity, and local social capital. Comparative studies may help clarify

differences across organizational configurations; longitudinal research may track changes over time; and mixed-methods approaches may combine the analysis of associations with an understanding of how rules, information, and social ties are used in practice. In the context of family farming, further research may also examine the interrelationship between the family and the production unit, generational succession, local norms, and attitudes toward formal controls.

Acknowledgments

We thank the Itamarati Rural Development Center (CDR) project, developed by the Federal University of Grande Dourados (UFGD), for supporting this research.

6 References

ARIA, M.; CUCCURULLO, C. Bibliometrix: an R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. **Journal of Informetrics**, v. 11, n. 4, p. 959-975, 2017. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007. Acesso em: 19 set. 2025.

BAAS, J.; SCHOTTEN, M.; PLUME, A.; CÔTÉ, G.; KARIMI, R. Scopus as a curated, high-quality bibliometric data source for academic research in quantitative science studies. **Quantitative Science Studies**, v. 1, n. 1, p. 377-386, 2020. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00019. Acesso em: 19 set. 2025.

BIJMAN, J.; HANISCH, M.; VAN DER SANGEN, G. Shifting control? The changes of internal governance in agricultural cooperatives in the EU. **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics**, v. 85, n. 4, p. 641-661, 2014. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12055. Acesso em: 22 set. 2025.

BIRKLE, C.; PENDLEBURY, D. A.; SCHNELL, J.; ADAMS, J. Web of Science as a data source for research on scientific and scholarly activity. **Quantitative Science Studies**, v. 1, n. 1, p. 363-376, 2020. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00018. Acesso em: 26 set. 2025.

BUSHMAN, R. M.; PIOTROSKI, J. D.; SMITH, A. J. What determines corporate transparency? **Journal of Accounting Research**, Chicago, v. 42, n. 2, p. 207–252, 2004. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-679X.2004.00136.x.

CARPES, A. M. S.; CUNHA, P. R. Corporate governance mechanisms in the different life cycles of agricultural cooperatives in southern Brazil. **Revista Contabilidade, Gestão e Governança**, v. 21, n. 1, p. 80-99, 2018. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.21714/1984-3925_2018v21n1a5. Acesso em: 27 set. 2025.

COSTA, B. A. L.; AMORIM JUNIOR, P. C. G.; SILVA, M. G. da. As cooperativas de agricultura familiar e o mercado de compras governamentais em Minas Gerais. **Revista de Economia e Sociologia Rural**, v. 53, n. 1, p. 109-126, 2015. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/1234-56781806-9479005301006. Acesso em: 24 set. 2025.

FERREIRA, M.; MACAGNAN, C.; VANCIN, D.; TOALDO, A. Technical assistance: a determinant of cooperative member loyalty. **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics**, v. 92, n. 4, p. 649-668, 2021. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12312. Acesso em: 20 set. 2025.

FRANKEN, J. R. V.; COOK, M. L. Do corporate governance recommendations apply to U.S. agricultural cooperatives? **Sustainability**, v. 11, n. 19, art. 5321, 2019. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.3390/su11195321. Acesso em: 23 set. 2025.

GRASHUIS, J.; SU, Y. A review of the empirical literature on farmer cooperatives: performance, ownership and governance, finance, and member attitude. **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics**, v. 90, n. 1, p. 77-102, 2019. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12205. Acesso em: 29 set. 2025.

HAKELIUS, K. Understanding the board of Swedish farmer cooperatives—cases focusing on board composition and interaction patterns. **Journal of Co-operative Organization and Management**, v. 6, n. 2, p. 45-52, 2018. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcom.2018.06.001. Acesso em: 20 set. 2025.

HAO, J.; BIJMAN, J.; HEIJMAN, W.; GAO, M. The effect of trust and social pressure on member commitment in agricultural cooperatives: evidence from China. **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics**, v. 95, n. 3, p. 919-944, 2024. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12467. Acesso em: 24 set. 2025.

HERCHENBACH, J. S.; BRIGGEMAN, B. C.; BERGTOLD, J. S.; SHANOYAN, A.; LOW, S. A.; MILLER, B. A skills gap analysis of farmer directors of US farmer cooperatives. **Agribusiness**, publicação antecipada on-line, 19 nov. 2024. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1002/agr.21997. Acesso em: 27 set. 2025.

HERNÁNDEZ-ESPALLARDO, M.; ARCAS-LARIO, N.; SÁNCHEZ-NAVARRO, J. L.; MARCOS-MATÁS, G. Curbing members' opportunism in first-tier and federated agricultural marketing cooperatives. **Agribusiness**, v. 38, n. 1, p. 195-219, 2022. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1002/agr.21718. Acesso em: 25 set. 2025.

HUHTALA, K.; TUOMINEN, P. Election of board members in cooperatives: a review on cooperative governance vis-à-vis corporate governance. In: European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 11., 2016, Jyväskylä, Finlândia. **Proceedings of the 11th European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship**: ECIE 2016. Sonning Common: Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited, 2016. v. 2, p. 945-954. Disponível em: https://www.proceedings.com/content/031/031940webtoc.pdf. Acesso em: 22 set. 2025.

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD). **Engaging with farmers' organizations for more effective smallholder development.** Rome: IFAD, 2016.

JAMALUDDIN, F.; SALEH, N. M.; ABDULLAH, A.; HASSAN, M. S.; HAMZAH, N.; JAFFAR, R.; AZIZ, S. A. A. G.; EMBONG, Z. Cooperative governance and cooperative performance: a systematic literature review. **SAGE Open**, v. 13, n. 3, 2023. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231192944. Acesso em: 30 set. 2025.

KUSMIATI, E.; MASYITA, D.; FEBRIAN, E.; CAHYANDITO, M. F. A study on the determinants of successful performance of Indonesian cooperatives. **International Journal of Social Economics**, v. 50, n. 9, p. 1285-1301, 2023. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-02-2022-0078. Acesso em: 22 set. 2025.

KYAZZE, L. M.; NKOTE, I. N.; WAKAISUKA-ISINGOMA, J. Cooperative governance and social performance of cooperative societies. **Cogent Business & Management**, v. 4, n. 1, art. 1284391, 2017. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2017.1284391. Acesso em: 25 set. 2025.

LIANG, Q.; LU, H.; DENG, W. Between social capital and formal governance in farmer cooperatives: evidence from China. **Outlook on Agriculture**, v. 47, n. 3, p. 196-203, 2018. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1177/0030727018778603. Acesso em: 24 set. 2025.

LIU, Z.; QU, J.; WU, X.; NIU, X.; FENG, S. Improving member satisfaction with cooperatives: the role of participation in governance. **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics**, v. 95, n. 3, p. 703-722, 2024. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.12456. Acesso em: 29 set. 2025.

MOHER, D.; LIBERATI, A.; TETZLAFF, J.; ALTMAN, D. G.; THE PRISMA GROUP. Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. **PLOS Medicine**, v. 6, n. 7, art. e1000097, 2009. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097. Acesso em: 30 set. 2025.

MORFI, C.; NILSSON, J.; HAKELIUS, K.; KARANTININIS, K. Social networks and member participation in cooperative governance. **Agribusiness**, v. 37, n. 2, p. 264-285, 2021. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1002/agr.21660. Acesso em: 24 set. 2025.

OTHMAN, R.; EMBI, R.; ABDUL ARIS, N.; MOHD ARIF, S. M.; CHING CHOO, H.; ISMAIL, N. Board governance and performance: an exploratory study of Malaysian cooperative organizations. **Journal of Southeast Asian Research**, v. 2016, art. 430025, 2016. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.5171/2016.430025. Acesso em: 27 set. 2025.

PAGE, M. J.; MCKENZIE, J. E.; BOSSUYT, P. M.; BOUTRON, I.; HOFFMANN, T. C.; MULROW, C. D.; SHAMSEER, L.; TETZLAFF, J. M.; AKL, E. A.; BRENNAN, S. E.; CHOU, R.; GLANVILLE, J.; GRIMSHAW, J. M.; HRÓBJARTSSON, A.; LALU, M. M.; LI, T.; LODER, E. W.; MAYO-WILSON, E.; MCDONALD, S.; MCGUINNESS, L. A.; STEWART, L. A.; THOMAS, J.; TRICCO, A. C.; WELCH, V. A.; WHITING, P.; MOHER, D. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. **BMJ**, v. 372, art. n71, 2021. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71. Acesso em: 20 set. 2025.

PEK, S. Reconceptualizing and improving member participation in large cooperatives: insights from deliberative democracy and deliberative mini-publics. **M@n@gement**, v. 26, n. 4, p. 68-82, 2023. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.37725/mgmt.2023.8478. Acesso em: 23 set. 2025.

PETTICREW, M.; ROBERTS, H. **Systematic reviews in the social sciences:** a practical guide. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

POZZOBON, D. M.; ZYLBERSZTAJN, D. Democratic costs in member-controlled organizations. **Agribusiness**, v. 29, n. 1, p. 112-132, 2013. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1002/agr.21324. Acesso em: 23 set. 2025.

SILVA, P. R. da; KASPER, L.; BRIZOLLA, M. M. B.; BRUM, A. L.; BAGGIO, D. K.; SAUSEN, J. O. A relação entre os mecanismos de governança e as práticas de responsabilidade social em cooperativas gaúchas. **Revista de**

Gestão Social e Ambiental, Miami, v. 17, n. 8, p. 1-16, e03963, 2023. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v17n8-027. Acesso em: 29 set. 2025.

SISTEMA OCB. **Manual de boas práticas de governança cooperativista**. [S. l.]: Sistema OCB, 2025. Disponível em: https://somoscooperativismo.coop.br/publicacoes-representacao/manual-de-boas-praticas-de-governanca-cooperativista. Acesso em: 3 jul. 2026.

SNYDER, H. Literature review as a research methodology: an overview and guidelines. **Journal of Business Research**, v. 104, p. 333-339, 2019. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039. Acesso em: 19 set. 2025.

TADESSE, G.; KASSIE, G. T. Measuring trust and commitment in collective actions: evidence from farmers' marketing organizations in rural Ethiopia. **International Journal of Social Economics**, v. 44, n. 7, p. 980-996, 2017. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-09-2015-0253. Acesso em: 25 set. 2025.

THOMAS, T. W.; GUNDEN, C.; MIRAN, B.; MANOI, M. A. Farmers' assessment of social and economic benefits derived from cooperatives, private firms and other agricultural organizations in the Aegean region of Turkey. **Journal of Food, Agriculture & Environment**, v. 9, n. 3-4, p. 1085-1087, 2011.

ZENG, L.; WAN, J.; HE, Q. Member commitment in farmers' cooperatives in China: the role of contractual and relational governance mechanisms. **PLOS ONE**, v. 18, n. 7, art. e0288925, 2023. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0288925. Acesso em: 26 set. 2025.

ZENG, L.; WAN, J. Substitution or complement: how do contractual and relational governance shape members' organizational commitment to farmer cooperatives? **SAGE Open**, v. 14, n. 3, p. 1-16, 2024. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241266660. Acesso em: 1 out. 2025.